The
THOREAU SOCIETY BULLETIN

BULLETIN FORTY-TWO WINTER, 1953

THOREAU'S ANNOTATIONS AND CORRECTIONS IN THE FIRST EDITION OF WALDEN . . . . . by Reginald L. Cook.

(Editor's note: Thoreau once annotated a copy of the first edition of WALDEN, correcting typographical errors and making such additions as he saw fit. It was given by his sister Sophia to a friend and inscribed on the fly-leaf, "Miss Cole, from her friend S. E. T." Later the copy was acquired by the late Mr. Paul Lemperly of Cleveland, Ohio, and eventually found its way into the Abernethy Library at Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont. Certain of these corrections and annotations have been incorporated into later editions of Walden. But only recently have certain restrictions as to the publication of all his annotations been relaxed. We are deeply indebted to Prof. Cook of Middlebury College for making this transcript and to the Abernethy Library for permission to publish it.)

Page 24, Line 20, for post read port

Page 29, Line 17, for wheat was handed read wheat is said to have been handed

Page 39 In margin opposite lines 28-30 ?

Page 103, Line 17, for come to the end of them read accomplish it

Page 129, Line 2, for are read were
Line 3, for rings read rang

Page 137, Line 5, for single read double

Page 147, Line 23, eliminate the comma after remunerate

Page 184, Line 14, insert comma after invariably

Page 198, Lines 5 to 11, Thoreau has noted: This is told of Alexander's Lake in Killingly Ct. by Barber v. his Con. Hist. Coll.
At bottom of page Thoreau has noted: Evelyn in his Diary (1654) mentions "the parish of Saffron Walden, famous for the abundance of Saffron there cultivated, and esteemed the best of any foreign country."

Page 199, Line 33, Thoreau has inserted after breams, Pomotis obesus [Nov. 26-58] one trout weighing a little over 5 lbs - (Nov. 14-57)

Page 201, Line 1, after it, insert kingfisher dart away from its cover,

Page 202, Line 33, after insects, insert (Hydrometer)

Page 217, Line 10, for white read black

Page 238, Lines 30-31 for rec- reate read re- create

Page 243, Line 3, after kind insert (mus Leucopus)

Page 274, at the end of poem add (Mrs. Hooper)

Page 277, Lines 27-28, for Strat- ten read Strat- ton
Line 31 is followed by an (X) and at the bottom of the page Thoreau has written: X Surveying for Cyrus Jarvis Dec. 23 '56 - he shows me a deed of this lot containing 6 A. 52 rods all on the W. of the Wayland Road - & "consisting of plowland, orcharding & woodland" - sold by Joseph Stratton to Samuel Swan of Concord In holder Aug. 11th 1777

Page 281, Lines 10-11, in margin opposite these lines (?)

Page 286, Line 31, after meadow insert (deer)

Page 289, Line 32, in margin opposite this line (?)

Page 294, Line28, for brisk read frisk

Page 300, Line 14, Thoreau has underlined the word Catt and written in the margin (can it be Calf? v. Mott ledger near beginning)

Page 312, Lines 26-27, in margin opposite these lines (?)

WALDEN - A CALMING INFLUENCE ..... by Edyth Walker

(Editor's Note: This is a condensation of a paper read at the 1952 annual meeting of the Thoreau Society. Prof. Walker is a member of the faculty of the State Teachers College at Cullowhee, N.C.)

The greatest philosophies given to mankind have come from religious mystics and prophets, colossal thinkers in the realm of the spiritual. Such philosophies usually have as their dominant appeal satisfactions and rewards, immediate and ultimate, in following a particular "way of life", or frustrations and punishments for failure to follow.

Very strangely, there emerged from the New England town of Concord more than a hundred years ago a unique philosopher named Henry David Thoreau whose "way of life" was not basically religious; one who made no religious profession, formulated no religious creed, attended no church. He promised no reward except that of joyous living day by day and threatened no punishment but failure to live an adventurous life while on earth. This American philosopher offered no "way of life" to others and sought no followers. He merely found a "way of life" for himself. While Thoreau's philosophy embodies some of the same fundamental truths as do the great religious philosophies, his approach to these truths was not through the medium of religious thinking. He reduced the fundamental qualities of his philosophy to these two sentences.

> To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity and trust. It is to solve some of the problems of life, not only theoretically, but practically." (1)

Thoreau's "Walden" sets forth more clearly than any other of his writings his discoveries in the real values of life. The writer has not only been intrigued with "Walden" from her first acquaintance with the book, but she has been particularly impressed with the quieting influence it has had upon her in times of tension and strain, and it is with this calming influence of Thoreau's philosophy that she wishes to deal at present.

One of the most remarkable things about Thoreau was that he discovered, earlier than most men do, that life itself is a precious thing, the most precious thing in human experience; not existence, but life; not making a living, but living; not living in some far away future or unknown world, but living in the ever present moment. One familiar quotation which helps to substantiate this is

> I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life.(2)

And to Thoreau the marrow of life was not choice foods and delicacies, costly and elaborately furnished houses, rich appeal, ease and comfort. Life to Thoreau was glorious sunrises, songs of birds in early morning, the cadences of tiny creatures in the stillness of the night, the radiant brilliance of stars, the tranquility of deep and undisturbed pools, glistening blades of grass on a frosty morning.

Amidst all the complexities of modern life, it is a stimulating thought to find that one American proved to his own satisfaction that simplicity in providing for bodily necessities makes for higher living. Neither houses nor furniture meant much to Thoreau, for, said he,

> I perceive that we inhabitants of New England live this mean life that we do because our vision does not penetrate the surface of things. We think that this is which appears to be....(3)

Thoreau's own penetrating vision pierced beyond the surface of things into the heart of life and lifted him out of an ordinary existence. Because of his elevating vision he was able to discern real values in life.

One of the most steadying and wholesome influences upon tired nerves and disturbing emotions is fresh, vigorous humor. Thoreau's wit is often

hidden between lines that are only subtly suggestive, but, if detected, it sparkles with invigorating charm. Note, for instance, one of his remarks about dress.

> The head monkey at Paris puts on a traveller's cap, and all the monkeys in America do the same.(4)

Just as Thoreau himself found a quiet retreat in his cabin at Walden, the healing oil of peace in the lucid waters of Walden Pond, or in his exciting and adventurous strolls through the woods, so the readers of "Walden", who are in tune with Thoreau's moods, are soothed, calmed, and refreshed by his constant experiences with nature. To Thoreau there was no balm like nature. When, in the frenzied hurry and bustle of life one becomes annoyed and vexed, worried and distraught, might he not turn, as Thoreau often did in reality, at least through the pages of "Walden" and restore his mind and soul to a proper perspective? Such passages as the following may have a truly recreative effect.

> The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is but the outside of the earth everywhere.(5)

The beautiful descriptions of Walden Pond, which became almost a sacred pool to Thoreau, cannot be overlooked in his awareness of nature. Here is one of these choice descriptions.

> What company has that lovely lake, I Pray? And yet it has not the blue devils, but the blue angels in it, in the azure tint of its waters.(6)

Leaving Walden Pond, one may walk with Thoreau into the deep woods and say with him, "These were the shrines I visited both in summer and in winter."(7) Hidden beneath the sheltering branches of trees one may drop the shackles of modern life and stand freed and unbound in the cooling shade of tall pines and lofty cedars. With such a penetrating search for the beauties of nature in all her forms, it is little wonder that Thoreau remarked, "Heaven is under our feet as well as over our heads."(8)

Perhaps the most calming influence of all to be found in "Walden" is Thoreau's repeated emphasis upon the necessity for unhurried living. More than anything else, it seems, Thoreau wanted time to live. He bewailed the frivolous and useless waste of time other men spent in making a living, who thereby lost the most precious part of life - leisure. He said,

> Most men, even in this comparatively free country, through mere ignorance and mistake, are so occupied with the factitious cares and superfluously coarse labors of life that its finer fruits cannot be plucked by them.(9)

And again Thoreau asked, "Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life?"(10) Today one is almost overwhelmed and engulfed with the staggering demands upon one's time, demands all out of proportion to the value of the activities themselves. It takes passages like this to make one realize the futile waste of time in chasing after mere phantoms of service and pleasure.

> When we are unhurried and wise, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent and absolute existence, that petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality.(11)

That Thoreau's whole nature revolted against exacting units of measure in time, so far as his own activities were concerned, must have been unmistakably true. One cannot think of Thoreau as ever having been willing to hurry. It is also evident that from his reading of Oriental literature he absorbed something of the "Oriental flavor" for contemplation and meditation.

It might be impractical to suggest that people today abandon time limitations as completely as Thoreau did, but if some part of each day could be set aside for quiet meditation and thought, the writer feels it would help to develop a more serene and poised life. Just as the sturdy oak withstands the weathering storms by extending its roots deep into the soil, one who is daily submerged into calm channels of thought is strengthened and enriched for more gracious living.

When, at the present, one is likely to be startlingly alarmed by the loud and strident noises of war or harassed by the minute cares of life, a sense of peace and security might be found within the pages of Thoreau's "Walden". One might share his zest for life, the true abundance of life shaped by genuine values, and say with Thoreau that, "We should come home from far, from adventures and perils, and discoveries every day, with new experience and character."(12)

Some of the metallic harshness of our strained voices and emotions might be mellowed and calmed by Thoreau's delightful humor; his challenge for greater leisure, for contemplation and thought; his energizing enthusiasm for nature in all her varied forms. Yes, if one would but dip deeply enough into "Walden", it might become a purifying experience, and, in Thoreau's own words, one might say, "How many a man has dated a new era in his life from the reading of a book."(13)

1. Henry D. Thoreau. WALDEN. Edited by E. W. Teale (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1946), p. 14.
2. p.90. 3. p.99. 4. p.26. 5. p.86.
6. p.142. 7. p.227. 8. p.319. 8. p.319.
9. p.7. 10. p.92. 11. p.94. 12. p.232.
13. p.110.

THOREAU FARM ..... Mrs. Caleb Wheeler

(Editor's Note: This was a paper delivered at the 1952 annual meeting. Mrs. Wheeler is vice-president of the Thoreau Society and the foremost authority on the houses of Concord.)

Though this is the spot where Thoreau was born, the house was moved in 1878 to the farm next East and is still standing. It has lost part of its big central chimney, its long sloping rear roof, and its hand hewn quoins and added a porch, shutters and modern windows so that it no longer looks like the three-hundred-year-old house which it really is. "Wherever men have lived, there is a story to be told, and it depends chiefly on the story-teller whether that is interesting or not. You are simply a witness on the stand to tell what you know about your neighbors and neighborhood". I have been studying the stories of old Concord houses for many years, but did not realize until I bought the new edition of Thoreau's Journal that he had, in this field, too, shown keen interest and makes an interesting witness. He measured the old Hunt house when it was torn down by Edmund Hosmer in 1859 and when the Tory Lee house burned in 1857, before the ashes cooled he investigated the date of 1650 scratched in the plaster, and proved that the date and plaster were not as old as the smoke-blackened chimney underneath.

Thoreau Farm and most of its neighborhood belonged in the last half of the seventeenth century after the second division of Concord land to Sgt. Thomas Wheeler (1625-1704). He conveyed land "at Verginy in Concord" to his sons John (1655-1736) and Timothy (1667-1718). Deacon John lived here and Timothy in the salt-box house against Pine Hill, half a mile to the East. About so, Deacon John Wheeler's house looked on this site. Deacon John's heirs sold the farm in 1755 to Samuel Minot, a cousin, who lived on the Bay Road beyond Meriam's corner. Samuel then gave it to his son Jonas "for love and affection". Thoreau tells us that the George "Minor who owned my bean-field in 1797 was a brother of my grandfather-in-law, directly descended from George Minot who was born in Saffron Walden"--a little village in Essex county, northeast of London. Another George Minot, Emerson's neighbor, who told Thoreau stories about the old times in Concord, was a grandson of Samuel Minot's brother, Col. James Minot.

Of Jonas Minot the Journal tells us "Mother says her father-in-law [stepfather] used to roast and eat a long row of little wild apples, reaching in a semi-circle from jamb to jamb under the andirons, but he had a quart of new milk regularly placed at the ~~placed at the~~ head of his bed, which he drank at many draughts in the course of the night. It was so the night he died, and my grandmother discovered that he was dying by his not

THOREAU'S BIRTHPLACE ON THE VIRGINIA ROAD

turning over to reach his milk. I asked what he died of and mother answered Apoplexy! at which I did not wonder--still this habit may not have caused it."

Another glimpse of him is found in the court records when he sued to recover on a note given him by a neighbor, Stephen Jones. Deacon Minot's son, Capt. Jones Minot testified that he overheard Jones boasting in the tavern that he would never have to repay the note (this was before the Revolution) because the Deacon hadn't bought stamps for it. Naturally the patriotic court found in the Deacon's favor.

At the auction of his effects in 1813, his son Stephen bought his wig for ten cents and his spectacles for 20 cents, his watch for $4.13, while the widow bought the copper-plate bedspread and some green-edged china. Neighbors bought a pair of blue small clothes for $1.20 and a pair of velvet ditto for $.50. Small clothes had gone out of style.

To Mrs. Minot was set off half the house--the east end, with the front room, chamber and garret over it, and the bed-room in the north corner of the house, and one-third of the farm. This she mortgaged to Josiah Meriam for $129. and moved to the village where she rented half the 'red house' opposite Emerson's orchard. Son-in-law John Thoreau took over the widow's thirds the next year when she repaid the loan to Si Meriam.

It had been the girlhood home of Henry's mother, Cynchia Dunbar, after her mother's marriage to Deacon Minot in 1798.

"My mother was telling me to-night of the sounds which she used to hear summer nights when she was young and lived on Virginia road--the lowing of cows or cackling of geese or the beating of a distant drum, but above all, Joe Meriam whistling to his team, for he was an admirable whistler. Says she used to get up at midnight and go and sit on the doorstep when all in the house were asleep and she could hear nothing in the world but the ticking of the clock in the house behind her."

"Mother remembers the Cold Friday very well [Shattuck says the Cold Tuesday was Feb. 1, 1814 -12°] The people in the kitchen drew close to the fire, but the dishes froze as fast as the Hardy girl washed them"

"I was born July 12, 1817 in the Minot house where Father occupied Grandmother's thirds carrying on the farm, the Kathrens the other half of the house. Bob Kathrens and John threw up the turkeys" This expression, I suppose, means that they tossed up turkeys roosting on the ground so that they would go up to the safety of a tree for the night. "Si Meriam was the next neighbor. Uncle David died when I was 6 weeks old. I was baptized in the old Minot house by Dr. Ripley when I was three months old and did not cry."

The following year John Thoreau and his family moved to "the red house where grandmother lived, and occupied the west side" going back to storekeeping.

Thoreau as a man picked blueberries in the East Quarter occasionally but seldom walked in this part of town. His Journal once reports seeing peat burning in the meadow here when Colburn Hadlock was the owner. Hadlock was also owner of the Middlesex Hotel and presumably kept pigs on the hillside, feeding them on refuse from the hotel so that the field became full of pieces of broken dishes. Thoreau crossed it in Jan. 1860 on his way home from skating on the Bedford meadows and remarked that it should be called Crockery Field. The hill he named Two Boulder Hill.

After Hadlock, Asa Brooks owned the house and in 1848 borrowed $2000. from the Savings Bank, which collected interest at six or seven percent without reduction of principal until 1895 when the son-in-law of William Tibbets, who was the owner after Brooks paid the bank but borrowed from Cyrus Clerk. On this mortgage neither principal nor interest was paid until we bought the farm in 1916. It was Tibbets who moved off the old house in 1878, and built the present house soon after.

(Note: All the material in direct quotations is from Thoreau's Journals and is indexed there.)

THE GROWTH OF THOREAU'S REPUTATION by Leonard Gray

Thoreau and his writings were known to a comparatively few people when he died in 1862 and his ardent admirers at that time were probably not so numerous as those who either condemned or belittled him. His reputation did not grow in proportion to the numerous articles about him and the reprints of his major works that appeared soon after his death. But during the last twenty-five years or so, the reading of his books and his reputation have grown rapidly. When we consider that when Emerson died and for many years after his death Thoreau's reputation was far surpassed by that of the former, it seems quite significant that from 1940 to 1950 research articles on Thoreau increased three hundred percent over those of the preceding decade and such articles on his great contemporary in Concord decreased a bit and that "Walden" appears on recent reading lists colleges recommend while none of Emerson's works appear on these lists. Why did Thoreau's reputation grow so slowly for many years and why has it grown so rapidly in recent years?

It could hardly be expected that Thoreau would soon win an increasing recognition when the disappearing high hopes, splendid intensity and beautiful idealism of Transcendentalism caused Emerson, a better known Transcendentalist than he, to lose to some extent his standing as a thinker, unless the time was ripe for the main contribution of the author of "Walden." And the time was not ripe for his criticism of society until nineteenth century optimism crashed in the twentieth century. Neither was the time ripe for his nature love, one of his minor contributions, until a craze for the natural beauties and wonders swept the country many years after his death. This craze increased his reputation a bit but did not bring him fully into his own since Thoreau, contrary to the predictions of his admirers in his own day, does not live chiefly as a poet-naturalist. Nor do we hold the belief of some of his critics that Thoreau's growing reputation is due chiefly to the increasing appreciation of his power over words even though we believe that this power is greater than that of Emerson's and of many other great writers. It is Thoreau's severe criticism of our values and ways of living, we stoutly claim, that accounts chiefly for the recent and remarkable growth of his reputation.

Great recognition of Thoreau probably came first from abroad. Tolstoi and Ghandhi greatly appreciated his genius and his values. And it was the nascent British Labour Party, offspring of Morris and Marx, but social rather than narrowly economic and with a purpose to restore and create values in everyday living that first gave this American writer his certain place in world literature, some claim.

If Thoreau's reputation is growing faster today than the reputations of most other great writers against the ills of society, and we believe it is, it is because through the homeliness of his experience and his stress upon the ways things treat the individual, he is more personal and meaningful to the people of our day. Thoreau by his own living showed definite ways to escape non-essential values and hurtful influences and this is what others with valuable contributions of thought such as Carlyle with his loud cry for heroes, Emerson with his appeal to man's spiritual nature, and Ruskin with his railing against the evils of mass production, did not do.

The failure of material success to produce happiness has brought a new appraisal of values that is turning more people to those of Thoreau. Increasingly in our industrial and mechanized society, men recognize that he speaks directly to the conditions of everyday living and that more and more he becomes their encourager and helper in their efforts to disentangle themselves from the trappings and encumbrances of our complex, highly organized society. While growing collectivism and the increasing demands of the state continuously encroach upon personal freedom and threaten to remove it, Thoreau helps an individual to remain a person and not merely a belt-driven wheel in a machine. The heavier strain that our high pressure society is putting on them and their greater understanding that man depends upon his natural environment more than upon gadgets for his physical and mental health are causing an increasing number of people to turn to what Thoreau taught about man's relationships to nature.

The "quiet desperation" that Thoreau wrote about is felt much keener today amid the many pressures and chains of our society than it was in his less demanding day. Through their personal reactions to an exacting and enslaving society and through learning from the contemporary psychologist that suppression of instinctive desires through conformity to conventional standards of worldly success causes disastrous effects upon personality, more people feel that the author of "Walden" understands them and speaks for and to them. It is the growing feeling then that Thoreau is right in his criticism of our society and of what it does to us that is the chief reason, we believe, for the increased turning to his writings for understanding and help and hence for the rapid growth of his reputation in our day.

QUOTATIONS IN WALDEN . . .

Your secretary is trying to trace the various quotations that Thoreau uses in WALDEN and would be grateful for any assistance in locating the following:

In Chap. II, the one about the king's son who was brought up by a forester.

In Chap. V, the verse beginning "Mourning untimely consumes the sad." It is apparently a versification of "Croma" from Macpherson's Ossian, but by whom?

In the same chapter, the long prose quotation beginning, "How vast and profound is the influence of the subtile powers of Heaven and of Earth!"

In Chap VII, the verse beginning, "And as he spake, his wings would now and then."

In Chap. XVI, the prose quotation in the first paragraph, beginning "O Prince, our eyes contemplate."

In the final chapter, the verse beginning "Direct your eye right inward."

In the same chapter, the tale of Tom Hyde the tinker.

In the same chapter, the philosopher speaking about taking a general away from its army.

In the same chapter, the prose quotation beginning, "Yes, we have done great deeds."

A THOREAU MISCELLANY . . . . . .

Columbia University has just acquired for its library a microfilm of most of the prose Thoreau manuscripts at Huntington Library, except for the letters and college essays.

An editorial in the Oct. 28, 1952 CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR claims that Thoreau would have paid his tax to support the present Korean war!

In reply to last quarter's question, Albert E. Lownes writes that the Thoreau Falls in the White Mountains were so-named by M. F. Sweetzer about 1876, and his handbook THE WHITE MOUNTAINS states "These falls were named by the Editor in memory of Henry D. Thoreau, the poet-naturalist, who has so often written lovingly of the Merrimac River and its fountains in the wilderness; and also in allusion to the polyglot meaning of his name, 'Thunder-Water.'" George Wright adds that there are two photographs of the falls in Karl P. Harrington's WALKS AND CLIMBS IN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS (1926), pp. 36-37.

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I am indebted to the following for information used in this bulletin: T.Bailey, C.Bieling, E.Buttrick, W.Conant, L.Gray, Kimberly-Clark Corp., E. Leisy, L.Litchfield, Oberlin College, E.Oliver, L. Stoller, and G. Wright. Please keep the secretary informed of errors, items missed, and new Thoreauviana.

The Thoreau Society Inc. is an informal organization of several hundred students and followers of the life and works of Henry David Thoreau. Membership is open to anyone interested. Fees are one dollar a year; life membership, twenty-five dollars. A price list of back publications may be obtained from the secretary. All material, unless otherwise assigned, is compiled or written by the secretary.

The officers of the society are Raymond Adams, Chapel Hill, N.C., president; Mrs. Caleb Wheeler, Concord, Mass., vice-president; and secretary-treasurer:

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